

from General Grant, who was twice honored with the executive chair of this nation. It is dated February 22, 1878, and is addressed to Judge Long, of St. Louis, and was first published in the *Globe-Democrat*, March 30, 1878. He says, speaking of the silver bill:

But if I were where I was one year ago and for the previous seven years, I would put a most unqualified veto upon the repudiation bill, called silver bill, if it should receive the vote of congress. I fear it has passed, but hope, if so, all business men in the country will work to defeat its operation by refusing to make contracts except to be paid in gold coin.

I do not know what he meant by "an unqualified veto," unless he was going on the principle that if you want to shoot a long way you must pull the trigger hard. [Laughter.]

Now, there has been great talk on this floor about "revolution," and for my part I deplore such agitation to a degree that is almost akin to horror. It seems to be a privileged question here, however. It intrudes itself upon our consideration at every moment and at the most inopportune times. I deplore everything like revolution or the disturbance of tranquillity anywhere, in congress or out of it. But I say here, as an ex-soldier who fought under General Grant's command, that to incite any portion of the American people to combine to defeat the operation of law, or to advise them to do so, carries with it all the moral guilt of revolution, and revolution of the worst kind. [Applause.]

The speaker *pro tempore*, (Mr. Harris, of Virginia.)—The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Gillette—I ask that the gentleman's time be extended.

The speaker *pro tempore*—That can only be done by unanimous consent.

There was no objection and Mr. Weaver's time was extended.

Mr. Weaver—Talk about the extravagance of the people! The author of that letter is spending more money to-day in his trip around the world than most of our poor constituents who labor for a living, will ever see or handle, and yet he advises the money kings of this country to combine and crush them. The New York clearing house and other financial organizations took him at his word; and the secretary of the treasury, although an officer not even named in the constitution, being a mere cabinet minister whose highest duty and pleasure should be to obey and enforce the laws, shook hands with Wall street and Lombard street, and struck hands with General Grant across the water, and with the men of this country who have fixed incomes, and says he will not pay out silver. Let me show you what he says. Here is a letter written by this eminent cabinet officer addressed: "To the Honest Money League at Chicago." [Laughter.] Honest money! The letter is dated the 30th January last. He says:

I have a clear conviction that the forced payment of the silver dollar to public creditors would tend to depreciate it and cause it to be sold in the market at less than par.

While it is the duty of the government to coin different kinds of money, a public policy dictates that it should be within the power of the citizen at his option to demand either form of lawful money.

Thus the secretary stands up in his place not to obey the law, but to say: "I have a conviction that if I obey the law it will injure the value of silver!" This reminds me of an incident that happened when an effort was being made to launch one of our great steamers. A sub-engineer in charge of part of the work feared that there was some defect or fault in her construction which would prevent her

from being safely launched. There was great confusion when the chief officer came upon the scene saying, "Launch her! Launch her! I'll take the responsibility." [Applause.]

Now, the American people say to the secretary of the treasury through the law of the land, "You are our servant; you have no law making power; we have told you to pay out the money and you must do it, and we will take the responsibility." Let me call particular attention to this remarkable language of the secretary:

While it is a duty of the government to coin different kinds of money, a public policy dictates it should be within the power of the citizen at his option to demand either form of lawful money.

You will see that this places an absolute veto against silver in the hands of the public creditor. The law says that it shall be legal-tender money for the bond. The secretary is bound by it, but he says the public creditor shall determine what he will take, and not the law. The president had a qualified veto of the bill and the veto failed. But the secretary, like an autocrat, confers upon the public creditor more power than the president possessed. He gives him an absolute veto. If that is to be the law the bonds can never be paid. Again, he has coined under the law the minimum instead of the maximum amount.

I shall, if I am recognized for that purpose, at the proper time, offer the following amendment:

The secretary of the treasury is hereby directed and required to cause to be paid out without discrimination standard silver coin the same as gold coin in liquidation of coin obligations against the government.

This amendment should be incorporated into this bill, and then I am in favor of passing it. And those who take the responsibility to defeat this measure, demanded by every consideration of public duty and justice, and by the almost universal public sentiment, will have to do so. The American people shall understand it.

The national Greenback party is not in favor of undue expansion of the currency. We believe in a trinity in finance—gold, silver and legal-tender paper—all issued by the government and not by banking corporations, and all full legal-tender. [Applause.]

The gentleman from Indiana, (Mr. De Lamater,) introduced a petition here; but he disclaimed upon the floor that it was his bill or that he indorsed it; yet the most indecent allusions that a man would dare to make on this floor have been indulged toward him. He seems to be the center of their abuse and detraction.

Mr. Thomas Turner—Did the abuse come from this side of the house?

Mr. Weaver—No, sir. [Loud cries of "Oh, no!" from the Republican side of the house.] I hope the gentleman from Indiana will pay no attention to the abuse. The post of honor is the post of danger. You may fire off your blank cartridges from the guns of your syndicate. Fire! We are here, and the national Greenback party has come to stay, I notify you of that. [Applause.] The workmen may fall but the work will go on. There is no doubt about that.

The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Horr) pranced down the aisle the other day, and facing the little party in the center, poured out the vials of his wrath. His effort was full of impotent rage and utterly void of argument. I wondered if there was any stringency in the money market up in his district, if there has been any bankruptcies there? Then the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. Chittenden) yesterday delivered a

very amusing speech, and I suppose he considers it a crusher; as a philippic it was a success; but it was as devoid of argument as the exhumed skull of a mound-builder. The gentleman styled himself a "capitalist and a robber." He was careful to say that he was a brother to any man who "owned" a bank, who "owned" a house, or who "owned" a railroad. But he expresses no sympathy for the vast army of the unemployed who "own" nothing but their labor. He claims no fellowship with them.

Gentlemen, if you want to discuss this question do it in a gentlemanly manner. Let us discuss the question calmly and logically. You cannot sneer this great movement out of existence. Ridicule has been your only argument thus far.

Over the wires this morning was flashed the news that the workingmen's party has carried California by ten thousand majority. [Applause.] And although the workingmen's bill to enforce the eight-hour law was defeated in this house yesterday, let me tell you that your action will recoil upon you, and will come back with redoubled force. The eyes of the people are upon you, and you cannot escape. Remember that when the American congress says that we will not enforce a law which was passed in the interest and at the behest of the workingmen of this country, but we will allow the heads of departments to violate that law, and then turn around and say that the workingmen must obey the laws of the country, you are setting an example that may be dangerous. You are sowing dragons' teeth; you are sowing to the wind and will reap the whirlwind. I hope the house will reconsider their action.

Joseph Cook, in a lecture in Boston, says that if the workingmen of this country demand legal-tender currency we will disfranchise them if it has to be done at the end of a bloody civil war.

I want to read a short extract from *Scribner's Magazine* of April last. This is from a man who claims to be a Christian, who has the control of one of the great periodicals of the country:

We cannot do what the French government once did under similar circumstances, banish fifty thousand of them to colonial or penal servitude; and it is a great pity that we cannot. If we could gather the whole disgusting multitude, wash them, put new clothes upon them, and under military surveillance and direction, set them quarrying stone or raising corn and cotton for ten years we might save some of them to decency and respectability, and relieve the honest people of the country of their presence and their support. If we cannot do this, however, there are things that we can do. Every state in the union can gather these men wherever found into workhouses where they can be restrained from soaring and preying upon the community, and made to earn the bread they eat and the clothes they wear. It is necessary, of course, to throw away all sentimentality in connection with them. The tramp is a man who can be approached by no motive but pain—the pain of a thrashing or the pain of hunger. He hates work, he has no self-respect, and no shame, and by counting himself permanently out of the productive and self-supporting forces of society he counts himself out of his rights. He has no rights but those which society may see fit to bestow. He has no more rights than the sow that wallows in the gutter or the lost dogs that hover around the city squares. He is no more to be consulted in his wishes or his will in the settlement of the question of what is to be done with him, than the bullocks in the corral. Legislation concerning this evil seems to have been initiated in various states; but at this writing we cannot learn that anything effective has been done. It would be well if the states could work in concert in this matter, but one great state like New York or Pennsylvania or Ohio has only to inaugurate a stringent measure to drive all the other states into measures that shall be equivalent. The tramp whose freedom is imperiled in New York would fly to New Jersey or to New England, and New Jersey and New England will be obliged to protect themselves. So one powerful state can compel unanimity of action throughout the country. The legislature of New York had a bill up a year ago which came to nothing, but something must be done very soon if we propose to have anything like safety and comfort in our homes, or to relieve ourselves of voluntary, vicious, and even malicious pauperism.

And that is not all. The other day my colleague from Iowa (Mr. Gillette) made a scholarly, able, well-tempered speech, one that was well received by the house and those holding his views throughout the country, a speech that was complimented everywhere. Now in the *Evening Telegraph*, a hard money paper published in that "loyal city" of Philadelphia, I find the following in a column notice of Mr. Gillette's speech:

If it were not for the cost of the powder and shot, his constituents had better take him out to an open lot and shoot him. Then further, speaking of our representatives, it says:

If there is a way to crush them it should be used, and if there is no way one should be invented.

That is the way they meet the discussion of this question. If a man dare to raise his voice for the oppressed poor, this is the argument he meets. Well, is this your game? Beware! It makes the syndicate and subsidized press as mad to see a greenbacker in congress as it does a bull to shake a red flag at him.

Mr. Kelley—That is not the *Telegraph* which you hold in your hand?

Mr. Weaver—No, but this is the leading Republican paper of Iowa—the *State Register*—which quotes and approves the villainous article.

Mr. Townsend, of Illinois—Is not the *Telegraph* a Republican paper?

Mr. Fisher—I can tell the gentleman that it is not.

Mr. Weaver—I guess it is a Republican paper.

Mr. Sapp—But here is a gentleman who has just said that it is not.

Mr. Weaver—No matter whether it is or not, the *Register* is, and both are hard money. You might take a magnifying glass that magnifies ten thousand diameters and you could not tell the difference between a hard-money Republican and a hard-money Democrat. [Laughter.]

Mr. Haskell—Let me ask the gentleman a question?

Mr. Weaver—What is it?

Mr. Haskell—You say there is not a particle of difference between a hard-money Democrat and a hard-money Republican. I hope that is true. Now I want to ask the gentleman if there is any difference between a soft-money Democrat and a greenbacker?

Mr. Weaver—The same difference there is between a soft-money Republican and a greenbacker. About the only difference is that the one is in one party organization and the other is in another if they are honest. Now, as to the infamous article from the Philadelphia *Evening Telegraph* and Iowa *State Register*, I want the historian to put these papers alongside the Okolona *States*, published in Mississippi. [Laughter.]

Now, the gentleman from New York (Mr. Chittenden) said that the people were extravagant and got in debt. The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Claflin) said the same thing. The inference is that all this business depression is the result of the extravagance of the people.

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